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# WIDENED INQUIRY ON BAKER IS URGED

## Miller Asks 'Teapot Dome Type' of Investigation'

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 12 —

The Republican National Chairman, representative William E. Miller, called for a "Teapot Dome type of investigation" into the Baker case today.

He told a luncheon at the National Press Club that he was not satisfied with the progress of the inquiry being conducted by the Senate Rules Committee into the outside business activities of Robert G. Baker, the former secretary of the Democratic majority of the Senate.

"What President Johnson ought to do," he said, "is what President Coolidge did with the Teapot Dome scandal. He appointed Senator Tom Walsh, a Democrat, to head the investigation so it would be nonpartisan. "We ought to have a man like Senator John Williams [Delaware Republican] heading this investigation."

The Teapot Dome inquiry into oil leases on public land was conducted by the Senate, and Senator Walsh was named chairman by the Senate, not by President Coolidge.

### Might Be an Issue

Mr. Miller of upstate New York said he thought the Baker case would be an important campaign issue this year.

"That doesn't mean I welcome it," he said. "I think the whole business is pretty sickening, and as an American with a real love for my country and a genuine belief in our system of government, I wish we could campaign on issues which do not strike at the personal integrity of officials in high places."

In his prepared text Mr. Miller sharply criticized the Johnson

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Administration for leaking information he said had been designed to discredit the testimony of Don R. Reynolds, a witness in the Baker case whose testimony the White House has found embarrassing.

"I cannot say whether the President played any part in this disclosure or not. I would suggest that he vigorously deny any implication and sternly discipline those who have brought the White House into this kind of disrepute."

Meanwhile, the Defense Department dealt warily today with the question of whether any of its officials had been involved and the reported leak.

### Sylvester to 'Check'

Arthur Sylvester, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, told reporters at his regular news briefing today that he would "check" on the existence of such a report, allegedly prepared within the Air Force.

Air Force Secretary Eugene Zuckery refused to discuss the question at all, referring inquiries to Mr. Sylvester.

Benjamin W. Fridge, a civilian personnel officer of the Air Force whose name appears as the author of a purported summary of Mr. Reynolds's background, refused to take calls from reporters.

The extent of official confusion over the question was indicated yesterday. Nils Lennartson, assistant to Mr. Sylvester, was asked who had requested that such a memorandum be prepared.

After checking, he reported that all he could say was that it had not been requested by the Air Force Secretary. He did not deny the memorandum existed.

Articles stating that such a report had been prepared, and that it had fallen into the hands of a newspaper columnist, Drew Pearson, were published in newspapers yesterday.

The articles were based on a "confidential note to editors" circulated by Mr. Pearson last week in connection with two columns he wrote about Mr. Reynolds.

### Allegedly From

The Pearson note, running to more than 600 words, contained derogatory information allegedly from Air Force files about Mr. Reynolds while he was a student at West Point and while in the Air Force during World War II. It purportedly carried the signature of Mr. Fridge, identified as Special Assistant for Manpower and Personnel.

The Pearson columns were described in this newspaper last week as part of an effort by persons in or close to the White House to discredit the Reynolds testimony two weeks ago in the Baker case.

Mr. Reynolds had told the Senate Rules Committee about the gift of an expensive stereo phonograph to Mr. Johnson, then majority leader, in 1959, and also said he had pressure to have him buy advertising time on a Texas television station owned by the Johnson family.

Mr. Reynolds, who is in the insurance business, said he had been asked to buy the phonograph by Mr. Baker as a gesture of appreciation for having been given the order for a \$100,000 policy on the life of Mr. Johnson.

He said the request that he buy \$1,208 worth of advertising time had come from Walter Jenkins, then an aide to the Senator and now a member of the White House staff.

The Rules Committee is investigating the business activities of Senate employees, past and present. So far, its inquiry has involved only those of Mr. Baker, who resigned his \$19,600-a-year post last fall.

White House spokesmen, as well as Mr. Pearson, have denied that the information for the columns came from the White House.

It is known, however, that information closely paralleling some of that in the Pearson columns did emanate from sources within the White House.

In response to a question from his luncheon audience today, Mr. Miller said he believed the Johnson Administration was "desperately afraid of what the Baker investigation may turn up if allowed to run its course."

But, he added, "the President owes it to himself and to the country to encourage a full investigation of this affair."

### Warning by Williams

DES MOINES, Iowa, Feb. 12 (AP)—Senator John J. Williams said today that whether the Baker affair became a Presidential campaign issue depended upon how the Johnson administration handled it.

The Delaware Republican, here for a party fund-raising dinner, said that if the Administration tried to thwart the investigation, then the matter would become a campaign issue.